

Radio Stamps

Prepared by

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Program 37

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Hello again, and welcome to the eleventh edition of *Radio Stamps* in 1993. A special welcome, as always, if you're listening to the program for the first time. You're tuned today to the monthly show that's all about the fun of collecting stamps on the topic of radio. This program combines the fun of listening to international radio and collecting stamps from around the world about radio. There are dozens of radio subjects you can collect on stamps, from amateur radio to radio stations. Collecting stamps on the topic of radio is another great way to enjoy the radio hobby.

This is program number 37, and the focus today is on Christmas. I have two collecting tips for you on a new subject you can start with your radio stamps collection - Radio at Christmas.

The development of radio as we know it today is not just the result of one person's work. Radio was made possible by the research of many experimenters, inventors and scientists, dating back to the 1600s. You can find and collect quite a few well known radio inventors on postage stamps, such as Volta, Hertz and Marconi. You can also collect lesser known inventors, but equally important, such as Popov from Russia, Murgas from Slovakia and Fessenden from Canada.

Here's a quick question to test your knowledge of radio history, as you listen to my voice today, being transmitted around the world by radio waves. Who invented AM radio, and was the first person to transmit the human voice by radio waves? No it wasn't Marconi. It was a Canadian, and his name was Reginald Fessenden.

Reginald Aubrey Fessenden was born in Canada in 1866. He was a contemporary of Marconi and Edison, but he was strongly opposed to Marconi's theory of radio transmission. Marconi believed that a radio transmission was a whiplash effect, a sudden impulse created by the violence of the electric spark, and shot out like the sound of a whip-crack in the air. Against the stormy protests of every recognized authority, Fessenden insisted that what we now called radio worked by continuous waves, as ripples, like ripples in the water, that moved in widening circles until they surrounded the receiving antenna. He also insisted that these continuous waves could make possible voice and other sound transmissions.

Fessenden's ideas were revolutionary. He was convinced that he could send voice by radio waves, without wires. Edison, on the other hand, thought this was as likely as man's chances of jumping over the moon. Fessenden stuck to his ideas. On Christmas eve, in 1906, 87 years ago, Fessenden made the first radio broadcast in history. From his station at Brant Rock, on the east coast of the United States, in Massachusetts, he broadcast to the ships of the United Fruit Company in the Caribbean. During that historic transmission, Fessenden made a short announcement, played a phonograph record, played "Oh Holy Night" on his violin, and sang the last verse.

There is only one postage stamp in the world that honours Fessenden and his revolutionary invention of AM radio. It was issued by Canada on June 25, 1987. The Scott catalogue number is 1135. It was issued in a set of four different stamps to commemorate Canadian inventors. It has a denomination of 36 cents

and features a portrait of Fessenden, with his radio receiver in the foreground. The background is illustrated with technical diagrams of his many inventions. This stamp is a must for any collection on the topic of radio.

Here's another first for your stamp collection that combines radio and Christmas. This time we move to the Ascension Island. In December 1982 the Island's postal administration issued four commemorative stamps for the 50th anniversary of the BBC. Each of the four stamps in this distinctive set includes the special BBC 50th anniversary logo. This clever design features a map of the world, from a north pole projection, placed over concentric radio waves with a symbolic radio tower. You'll need a magnifying glass to see the logo words "50 Years of Broadcasting to the World". The 40 pence stamp in this set shows King George V making his first Christmas BBC radio broadcast to the empire in 1932. The Scott catalogue number is 320. These two stamps, on a new subject of Radio at Christmas, would make great additions to your collection. I hope someone close to you, perhaps listening to the radio with you today, will surprise you with these radio stamps as a special Christmas present.

Next week I'll be selecting the winner of the annual draw for *Radio Stamps* reporters. All listeners to this program are invited to join in during the year and report on new issues of radio stamps from around the globe. You can participate once a year if you like, or as often as you wish. It's easy to join in as a *Radio Stamps* reporter. Just write to me with news from your part of the world about any new issue or find of stamps on the topic of radio. News is also welcome from reporters about published references on radio stamps. If you find an interesting article about collecting stamps on the topic of radio, in a radio or a stamp magazine, write and tell me about it. I'll give you my address in a moment.

Be sure to include your name and address with each of your reports. The names of all contributors to the program are entered in the annual draw to win stamps on the topic of radio. Each time you contribute as a reporter to the *Radio Stamps* program, your name is entered for the draw. The last two winners of the annual draw for *Radio Stamps* reporters were Rudi Eko Marwanto, of Indonesia, and Peter Grenfell of New Zealand. I'll announce the 1993 winner next month.

Next month I'll also be announcing the winner of the contest that was featured on the October and November programs. Listeners were invited to send me a postcard, with the words Radio Oranje, to win one of two first day covers from the Netherlands to commemorate this famous programme which was broadcast during the second world war, on BBC transmitters, by the Dutch government in exile. Thanks to Jonathan Marks of Media Network, I'm giving away two of these unique covers. I hope you'll be listening next month for the names of the winners.

As promised, here's my mailing address. Neil Carleton, that's spelled N-e-i-l C-a-r-l-e-t-o-n, P.O. Box 1644, Almonte, spelled A-l-m-o-n-t-e, Ontario, spelled O-n-t-a-r-i-o. The postal code here in Canada is K0A 1A0. The address again is Neil Carleton, P.O. Box 1644, Almonte, Ontario, K0A 1A0, Canada.

Until the next time, best wishes for good listening and collecting.